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brought out charmingly, and with but little work. Pongee in the natural hue does very well for a similar experiment in color, and any of the deeper shades of yellow in soft silk are recommended, not only for decorative effect, but because this hue is apt to be effective in whatever corner of the room you may elect to dispose of it, whether tête-à-tête with a blue couch or on an easy chair of Indian red. Where the possessor of a down pillow aspires to the simplest method of covering it, without the additional tax of needlework, I would suggest a width of one of the soft foulard satins now sold for dress purposes in all the principal shops. One of these satins, cream-tinted, and besprinkled with Pompadour bouquets of pale pink and blue, was made to do duty for this purpose with success. When a present for an invalid is in question, or, indeed, in any case where the cushion is habitually used, the best plan is to make a movable cover of linen to use over the inner lining of rose colored, lavender, or blue silk. For this purpose drawn-work in all its varieties comes into play effectively, and the finer the material the more attractive the result. Work a border upon drawn threads of the linen, and add a few scattered sprays of flowers, worked in split filosele that has been previously set in color by dropping the skein into boiling water. Clover, purple and white, is full of fragrant suggestion and of invitation to the head inclined toward it. The cover, when finished, should be edged with lace.

A hand-bag, to be mounted with old clasps of Norwegian workmanship in silver, has the blossoms of the hydrangea in pinks and purples so overlapping each other as to leave no glimpse of the original ground. The flower forms are, after working, outlined with silver thread caught down by couching-stitches.

A piano front, worked to replace the wooden fret-work in an upright piano, is a frieze of dancing figures, some of them holding musical instruments. The ground is soft gray linen, and the silk used is French floss, the spaces filled in by old brick-stitch. This is a most successful imitation of ancient embroidery, and is an immense improvement upon most of the commonplace antique designs of trailing flowers in crewel work. If one is afraid to undertake drawing figures, a conventional Italian scroll design may be filled in after the same method. Brick-stitch, it will be remembered, is a filling stitch, a variety of "laid-work," where the soft floss is crossed by irregular stitches of silk or gold taken like the divisions between bricks in a wall, and covering the entire ground.

A pretty table-cover recently brought from Paris is made of old-gold satin sheeting with a border in appliqué of dark blue cloth worked with gold thread and crimson silk. The shape of this cover is oblong rather than square and the two ends only are knotted with fluffy tassels of combed out crewel and silk in all the colors employed.

Another table-cover, suitable for library use, is made of golden-brown cloth, a border and corner designs heavily worked in dark brown silk and outlined with gold threads. Gold beads are used to enrich various portions of the design and the leaves are veined with gold.

A new variety of plush work is to adorn deep red or blue plush borders or covers with appliques of silk previously worked in silk and gold upon linen in a hand-frame. The appliques are padded before working in order to give the work a raised effect when transferred to the deep pile of the plush. Gold sprays, fleur-de-lis, trefoils and quatrains are worked in the same manner upon linen and subsequently transferred to plush.

An effective method of decorating the dado of a portière in olive serge is to cut strips of dark blue cloth, and dispose them in the shape of a trellis work across it. Baste them on, and then cut out large bold flowers and leaves from maroon and dark green satin sheeting. Group these upon the trellis like a growing vine, some of the flowers and buds passing under the trellis, others lying upon it. Baste or gum all in place; then use silks and crewel to button-hole stitch the edges down. Work a coarse line of brown crewel for the stem. The trellis may be button-holed with red or old gold, while the flowers and leaves look best when worked with a shade corresponding to their hue. Vein the leaves and point the flowers when all is finished, and occasionally touch the foliage with deep red. A showy variety of this work was made by using gold braid for the trellis upon a ground of plush or dark velveteen, and in this case the flowers were partially embroidered and the foliage appliqué.

CONSTANCE CARY HARRISON.

A LADY ARTIST ANSWERS MR. HORSLEY.

ATTENTION was recently called in these columns to the extremely bigoted and offensive remarks by the London Royal Academician, Mr. J. C. Horsley, at the Newton Abbot School of Art, as to the position of women in the world of art. A lady artist makes a spirited reply in a letter to *The (London) Artist*. We give it almost entire:

Once for all it should be understood that art is of no sex, and an individual of the genus man may be gifted with the art faculty, be it music or painting, without distinction of sex. Nature gifts both alike. The training only makes all the difference in the results.

Mr. Horsley's remark that female artists have never been as gifted as male, and therefore never can be, is altogether a mere assertion. Certainly they have hitherto not had the chance of competing simply because they have had no art training. As to the question of propriety Mr. Horsley shows a strange want of knowledge of the facts of the case even to speak of mixed classes and painting from "the naked model," as they don't exist! The classes study separately. I should imagine that Mr. Horsley as an artist would understand that to the true artist the model is always but a lay figure to which his or her work alone gives life. Moreover, artists invariably employ the words draped or undraped, not the incorrect terms adopted by Mr. Horsley which doubtless and very properly shocked the ears of the audience.

Lady artists suffered very many years from the cutting remarks often no doubt truthfully made about their work—that the anatomy was entirely wrong, and that had they understood the drawing of the figure in the slightest degree they would not have been guilty of such faults in drawing. Ladies have therefore ascertained that in order to understand "in the slightest degree" how to draw the human figure they must adopt the method of training so advantageously pursued by the male artists—that of drawing from the undraped model. These studies they are now following with very great and astonishing results, not only so to themselves but greatly to the advantage of the real models who sit draped or undraped as the case might be. These girls are no longer a degraded set, a disgrace to their sex, as they were once thought; but now that the profession of "sitting as a model" is protected by women the girls have distinctly improved as a class. They have risen in their own estimation, and they are both morally and mentally benefitted by sitting to ladies who treat them wisely and kindly, and who are looked upon by the models as their friends as well as their employers. Let it be noted that a model who objects to sit to a lady is now looked upon both by ladies and other models as one who has been ruined in morals by sitting to gentlemen alone. She requires high prices, contracts irregular and unsteady habits; in fact, a lady never asks twice for a model who does not like to sit to ladies.

This fact speaks for itself. If ladies give up painting from the undraped model the class will degenerate into the same state from which lady artists have rescued them. They are now a good respectable hard-working class of girls, and their calling no longer misconstrued.

Touching the question of propriety, if there should be any thought of evil at all it appears to me it would entirely lie the other way, and that the restriction should be not in the ladies working from one of their own sex, but in the men doing so. Ladies never paint from the male model as the men do from the female model, and simply because pictures are chiefly, as far as undraped figures go, composed of female ones. However, if for the future men should still bitterly complain of the impropriety of the ladies, it can easily be solved by the ladies keeping all the female models to themselves, and painting only from them on the condition that the men will be equally reasonable and paint only from their sex also. At the same time ladies are always susceptible to kind instruction and advice, and the very valuable works of art recently exhibited by Mr. Horsley will no doubt make him an estimable guide to art students, especially to those supremely Christian ones who consider the highest morality consists in millinery. Only that weak portion condemned by Lord Shaftesbury we are told, and who are lost in atheism and infidelity, believe, it seems, that they were made in the image of God, and are therefore not ashamed of true purity. I therefore as a lady artist, and in behalf of a great many others, beg to protest absolutely and entirely in the name of all true morality in life as well as in art, against the opinions expressed by Mr. Horsley; and to say very decidedly, we, under a deep sense of duty as Christian citizens, decline completely and positively to follow his advice.

Yours faithfully, ISABEL DE STEIGER.

CORRUPTION OF RENAISSANCE ORNAMENT.

DR. DRESSER, who declares in his "Principles of Design" that he is "chilled and repelled by all Renaissance ornament"—whether it be Italian, French, or English—must have been gratified if he attended the lecture of Mr. H. H. Stannus in London not long since. The lecturer in his arraignment, however, did not include *all* Renaissance ornament, emphasizing, indeed, the exception he made as to the "purer phases of the earliest period." He explained that, adopting as a text Ruskin's beautiful simile of each successive style being the daughter of a preceding one, he wished to trace the progress and development of hereditary disease, which eventually occasioned the death of the styles descended from the Renaissance. He classed the pure Renaissance as a style with the finest early English or the best period of Greek art; and for that very reason he said he wished to warn the younger members against the dangers of degeneration to which it was liable. This disease might be likened to a scrofula, which, first attacking the complexion, progressed in successive generations from bad to worse till it attacked the whole body, and the abominations of the Louis Quinze period were perpetrated.

The decline began about the time when the Italian decorator, Primaticcio, was invited by Francis I. to settle in France to superintend his works of building. In a detail by Primaticcio might be traced the first beginnings of evil in a curving over of an elliptical moulding. True, it seemed to add to the beauty and intricacy of the work, but it was the first step in the misuse of material. The moulding was evidently regarded as a plastic material to be twisted or altered with impunity, and very soon it was treated with as much familiarity and freedom as if it were a leather scroll instead of a raised line in stone carving. How these scroll forms were misapplied in Elizabethan work is well known to all, but the origin is not so apparent. A further development soon followed. The artist noticed the effect he had produced, and so surely as he did that he was certain to go wrong. He saw the little piquant spot of light produced by the turn he had given the moulding, and this, he thought, could be turned to account. He, therefore, permitted his work to become less and less structural; the scrolls were developed, especially on shields inserted in tablets, until a whole panel became a series of fretful curves, distracting and disturbing the eye of the spectator. This voluted work became rampant and ruled the whole design. In the ceiling of the Sala del Senato, in the Ducal Palace at Venice, the beams of division were honestly formed and displayed, cutting it into nine panels; but the whole ceiling was reduced to a sprawling, wriggling mass of curls, and wretched picture-frames, all abominably gilt. We admire the immense technical ability shown in the joinery and the wonderful skill displayed in the gilding, and yet we feel that the sum total is a failure because it lacks constitutional honesty and force. In another and somewhat later ceiling we may see that the whole composition is but a frame with pictures let in, and that the divisions might as well be of composition as of woodwork. The church Santa Maria del Miracoli, at Brescia, is a building of beautiful proportions and good quattrocento work, but it has been spoiled by the rococo ornament added to it in the seventeenth century.

Coming to the French Renaissance beginning with Francis I., who called in the foreign artist before mentioned, Primaticcio, the French could do anything that was set before them when once they had been shown the way. Examples of this period show stonework treated in its design in a style only applicable to woodwork, while woodwork and cabinets are designed to indicate stonework. Other instances showing the peculiar treatment of the style may be found in the gates and panels of this period. Francis was succeeded by Henri II. Specimens of his style were pointed out by the lecturer among the drawings on the wall. There was an example of a door, tolerably pure in design, and also a ceiling which was a fair specimen of the work. It was not structural, as the beam shown played no essential part in the construction, the designer being more inclined to what he thought a pretty ceiling than a ceiling which would hang together. It was what was called scenic architecture—meant to please the eye, and it carried inherently the seeds of its own decay and fall. Next notice was called to the treatment of volute and pediment caught from Francis I., who had it from Primaticcio. Beauty was seen in the pediment, and so it came to be misused and misplaced as an ornament. To give an instance, a pediment was inserted at the back of cast-iron fireplaces—the large fireplaces used with dogs. Coming to the time of Henri III., the pediment became broken in the middle or twisted, and the volute was turned round. There were also many examples of Louis XIII. style among those on the walls. A peculiarity of the French, it was remarked, is the marvellous cut-and-dried way they have of dividing off their styles. The English do not name their styles nearly so elaborately as the French do theirs.

After tracing the progress of decadence under Louis XIV. at some length, Mr. Stannus showed the evil in its worst form of development under Louis XV., pointing out in detail the misapplication of ornament in regard to material, and the sacrifice of construction and the strength of material for the sake of effect. There could not be a deeper sink, he said, of moral corruption than there was at that time. Art had apparently sunk to the same low level. A trite moral was pointed in the act of the French, who rose and swept it all away—the punishment that should have fallen on Louis XV. falling on his son. He had shown how a taste for falsehood and trickery in art had been contracted, carrying with it the seeds of decay; how it had got into the hands of kings and nobles, each of whom had out-Heroded Herod, till at last it died of its own rottenness.

Mr. Geo. R. Halm, whose attractive decorative designs are well known to our readers, has been appointed manager of the art department of the Orange Judd Publishing Company of this city. Mr. Halm has acquired a good reputation in his profession, and will have a fine opportunity in his new position for the exercise of his talents.

Correspondence.

THE PARIS DECORATIVE ART EXPOSITION.

SIR: With the Salon, on the twentieth of June, closed the annual Exposition des Arts Decoratifs at the Palais de l'Industrie. Candor compels one to acknowledge that it has not been a particularly interesting exhibition, even to one of highly decorative tastes, and even representing as it does—or strives to do—the present high-water mark of decorative achievement of the nation whose tastes once led the world.

Fortunately the world will no longer be led blindfold by a taste which, whatever it may once have been, is no longer vigorous or original, and seems fallen into a state of merely self-imitative existence, all the more surprising that the picturesque and plastic art of the country is yet vital with ideas, however loudly it proclaims that art is only technique.

In the way of household furnishing and feminine costume, for instance, what do the words "French taste," nowadays suggest but soulless vanity?—light, gay and airy with artificial elegance, but as devoid of natural grace and expression as those tiny jewel-boxes of boudoirs in which wax candles burned all day, where the air swooned with its burden of musk and attar-of-roses, and where neither sunshine nor fresh air ever entered, which were triumphs of decorative art in Marie Antoinette's day.

Nowhere can one feel more vividly the mindlessness of French decorative art than at Windsor Castle. That Gothic pile, grand and solemn, in spite of its architecture of anachronisms and discrepancies, speaks eloquently to one's spirit, and lifts it from its ordinary level to the grander heights of the race. We are mind and spirit only while wandering through those mighty Gothic halls, till we come to the apartments "elegantly" furnished in Louis XV. style. The shock with which that meaningless show of gold, white, and crimson in that imaginative atmosphere brings one to earth again is indescribable.

French genius always claims to be Latin and classic, hence more for form than spirit, as opposed to the genius of England and the northern races, which is Gothic and imaginative. Decorative art, of course, means form rather than imagination, and ought, perhaps, therefore, to be the peculiar forte of Latin and classic nations. Nevertheless, few persons with a drop of Saxon blood in them, would not, it seems to me, prefer the most grotesque Gothic vagaries even in household and decorative art to the watery and monotonous classicism which predominated in the Exhibition this year.

Among paintings De Nittis had a large canvas, as "decorative" as his work usually is, but no more so. This canvas proved interesting to every American at once for the success of the artist's endeavor to introduce an elegant New Yorker among the French people of the scene. The New Yorker is refined of feature and expression, enough of the world, worldly, and yet not too much so, just the type of the best breeding and style that we always recognize abroad as our very own, and which is so much better to our minds than the "very own" of any other nation under the sun.

The other mural decorations consisted, of course, largely of seasons, auroras, animals, young women in gardens, flowers, and the like. Some of these were pure eccentricities in color, and so far original; but a more prevailing, and, therefore, of course, fashionable style, was a sort of Boucher-like tone, resembling pastel, although done in oils. Wall decorations, according to one modern French school, must no longer be rich, deep, and vivid, as when Ghirlandajo worked or when Rubens painted his "Apotheosis of Marie de Medici," but chalky and vague like Puvis de Chavannes. According to another, it must be also not rich, deep and vivid, but absolute realism of color and form subjected to clever artistic flattening, so that it shall not try to deceive one with ideas of space and perspective when looking upon a mere painted wall. Still another style, a new whim of decorative color, was rather conspicuous, as if France might be trying to settle upon some far off pagan sunset hue to rival the peacock blues and sage greens of mediævally-minded England. This was a sort of purplish pink, almost a magenta, a color which has no right to exist except in costumes of scarecrows. It showed itself mostly in flat backgrounds of walls, tapestry, and carpets, being so artificial a color that it is seldom found in natural objects.

There were numerous figure pieces, usually panels for dining-rooms, with flat landscape backgrounds, painted in the large fashion of color and form of Bastien-Lepage, who, realist as he is, has peculiar qualities for decorative work. Let Bastien-Lepage run his horizon line high up out of sight into the frame of his picture, and the picture would look like very striking tapestry. His peculiar greens too are delightfully toned for pure decoration.

Guifard sent a design for the decoration of the staircase of Bonnat's hotel, pure Renaissance in intention, but equally Parisian in the flutter and unrest of every human figure in it. Pinel sent a windy ceiling, Lameire another—indeed, a modern wind blew steadily through all this shadowy classicism. All the Venuses and Psyche were breeze-tossed, the Cupids had all they could do to keep any semi-classical pose, even blind Homer's locks surged tempestuously about his ears, and he touched his harp with a redundancy of motion not strictly classical, but doubtless necessary amid all that modern tumult.

In the way of mobilier, the exhibit was singularly small. There were a few fauteuils of Louis XVI. style upholstered with imitation Aubusson in the very palest ash ground, a table of mosaic marbles, round and characterless, two or three meuble-credenches of carved walnut, a carved mirror-frame or two, and nothing else but decorated screens. On the mirror-frames the Cupids were as restless and Parisian as elsewhere. Every one of them seemed to have something to say, and to wriggle upon his perch as if he would far rather be a real Parisian Gavroche than an eternal Cupid in a century which believes in Gavroches, but no longer in Cupids. As far as the Exposition goes to prove the contrary, not a single idea on the subject of chairs and tables has turned itself over in the French mind since the days of the Bourbons.

Among the architectural designs, but one solitary chimney-piece had not the coldly regular vertical and level lines of the Greeks. In an English exhibition of this kind, what imaginative feeling would have shown itself in the strong uprising of lines that refuse to point anywhere else than to a purely imaginary world, or to bear the decorative burden of other than purely imaginary beings!

A peculiarity of French taste is shown upon one of these level mantels. Out from under grave cornices and between Doric pilasters starts—as if from a spring box—a human head, not calm and passionless like Doric sculptures of divinity or nymph, but piquant and laughing, coquettish and gay, the very type of a Palais Royal soubrette upon the stage. Between Doric columns and Palais Royal soubrettes there seems a want of artistic unity even to the eye of an American Goth.

To this Goth, who sometimes almost hates the Renaissance, it was a relief to get among the designs for statuary and to find the prevailing feeling at once departed from, as if plastic art knew some other century than the fifteenth, whose ghosts so haunt French decoration. Statuary to some minds is nothing if not antique classical, and such minds would have been much discontented with the prevailing realism of the exhibit, all the imaginative work apparently congregating in the Salon gardens. There were several realistic groups with ideal titles, such as Fortitude, Labor, Charity, and one strutting figure of Jeanne Darc, as little classically suggestive as anything can be when running to the tune